

# W O A N S

## Love and Money

Cyberlove and chat room couplings are as much a part of online lore as hacker fiends and wild viruses. So, connecting and tracking these millions of plugged-in lonely hearts is a prime business opportunity. Enter Electric Classifieds Inc., one of the first companies to turn Internet matchmaking into a profitable, full-time enterprise.

## Jargon Watch

## Alpha Geek

The most knowledgeable, technically proficient person in an office or work group. "Ask Larry, he's the alpha geek around here."

## Critical Mess

An unstable stage in a software project's life when any single change or bug fix can result in two or more new bugs. Continued development at this stage leads to an exponential increase in the number of bugs.

**G.O.O.D. Job**

**A "get-out-of-debt" job.** A well-paying position you take to pay off your debts, and one you'll quit as soon as you're solvent.

**NIMQ (pronounced "nihm-kyoo")**

Acronym for "Not in My Queue." Said in response to suggestions to take on additional tasks or projects when you're already overwhelmed. Similar to the more common "It's not *my* job."

## Paintmonkey

Someone with a less-than-glamorous entry-level computer graphics job. A paintmonkey may spend months on a nanosecond of digitized film footage, painting mattes, or doing monotonous touch-ups.

## Softlifting

Microsoft's technique of using a small worm program to interrogate computers on a network. The program gathers intelligence on what software is being run on the machines, and then reports back to Microsoft when the customer signs up for The Microsoft Network. This is reportedly a "feature" of a beta version of Windows 95.

## Vomit Comet

A plane used to simulate zero-G for astronaut flight training. Trainees often get motion sickness inside.

– Gareth Branwyn ([jargon@wired.com](mailto:jargon@wired.com))

*Tip o' the coonskin cap to: James Kim, Arnie Cachelin, Mikki Halpin, Stanton McCandlish, Mark Smith, Patrick W. P. Dirks.*

**Founded in San Francisco a little over a year ago by 31-year-old CEO Gary Kremen, the idea for Classifieds Inc. "came to me in the shower," Kremen says, smiling. "I thought it would be really interesting to use the Internet for relationships, and to do it right."**

### Kremen joined forces with partner Peng



**Tsin Ong; together they hustled up enough money to get the business off the ground. The lion's share of the US\$1.7 million start-up fee came from Canaan Partners, a Silicon Valley venture capital firm. Sitting on Electric Classifieds' board is the recently named president and CEO of Prodigy, Edward Bennett, along with Ron Posner, whose San Francisco-based StarPress Multimedia has published CD-ROM titles for *Sports Illustrated*.**

After a year in development, the company is rolling out its flagship and offering an interactive digital personals service called match.com (expected to be followed by other classified offerings such as jobs.com and housing.com). Open to anyone over 18 with an e-mail account, match.com allows the user to browse and find matches based on personal criteria. The yet-to-be-defined fee will be at or below the cost of the print competition, says Kremen.

**The service is already turning the heads of those in the human connections business. "Being able to control the process and take away the economic barriers – precisely what match.com does – addresses two of the major problems in the dating service industry," says Trish McDermott of the International Society of Introduction Services.**

**While reducing the whirlwind of courtship to digital science might not work for everyone, Electric Classifieds' intense focus on a market tailor-made for cyberspace puts it one step ahead of the game. Electric Classifieds Inc.: +1 (415) 284 5300, <http://www.match.com>, e-mail [info@match.com](mailto:info@match.com). – Todd Krieger**